

Natural Curiosity
The Hermosa Project
Fundraising Proposal

Travis Perry, President

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Figure 1: Wild Semester students, based at Hermosa, clearing the Black Range Crest Trail in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness.

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Summary of the Proposal

Our vision is to leverage the Hermosa and Kelsey properties to provide stewardship for the Aldo Leopold Wilderness and conservation education, training, and inspiration for thousands over time.

With the help of conservation minded donors, Natural Curiosity is going to purchase and renovate the Hermosa and Kelsey properties, at a total cost of \$1.5 million. Purchasing these properties will allow us to further our mission, greatly expand our impact, and make this incredible outdoor venue available for the education of many, many more students, professionals, and members of the general public, especially those in under-represented groups in conservation. It will also provide a much needed base for stewardship of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness.

Financial Summary With the purchase of the Hermosa and Kelsey properties, Natural Curiosity’s primary revenue stream will derive from renting the properties to other groups, institutions, and organizations for outdoor education, training, and ecotourism (edutourism). Revenue will be used for facilities, to support our own course needs, and most importantly to pay for more students, professionals, and members of the public to have extraordinary outdoor education experiences.

Table 1 shows a summary of projected income and expenses through 2025. The income category includes the \$1.5 million raised for purchase and renovation. The purchase price is \$850,000. Each following year a portion of the remaining \$650,000 from this fundraiser will be used for renovation and improvement. These holdovers are included in the income category of years after 2022. The table also includes a financial projection for net income if we are unsuccessful in raising the \$1.5 million and purchasing the properties. In that event, programs will be entirely tent based.

Table 1: Summary financials through 2025

Description	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Income/Revenue	\$1,539,250	\$753,676	\$431,498	\$449,936
Total Expenses	\$886,885	\$359,455	\$110,991	\$89,293
Net Revenue with Property	\$652,365	\$394,221	\$320,507	\$360,643
Net Revenue without Property	\$2,365	\$44,221	\$20,507	\$85,643

To Make Tax Deductible Donation

Please visit our website at: <https://www.natural-curiosity.org/hermosa> to make an electronic donation or make a donation pledge.

Or you can mail check or money order to:

Natural Curiosity, Inc.

C/O Leslie Clark, Treasurer

P.O. Box 69006

Oro Valley, AZ 85737

Background to Hermosa and Kelsey Properties

These properties sit at the doorstep of 760,000 acres of designated wilderness, *the world's first*, the Aldo Leopold and the Gila, in the Gila National forest of New Mexico (Figure 2). These properties and their environs are places of extraordinary natural beauty and astonishing biodiversity. Mexican wolves, mountain lions, black bear, elk, and mule deer are among the resident large mammal fauna (Figure 3). These properties are the idyllic locations to foster an appreciation for the awesome splendor of nature, an understanding of how the natural world works, and a deeply abiding conservation ethic.

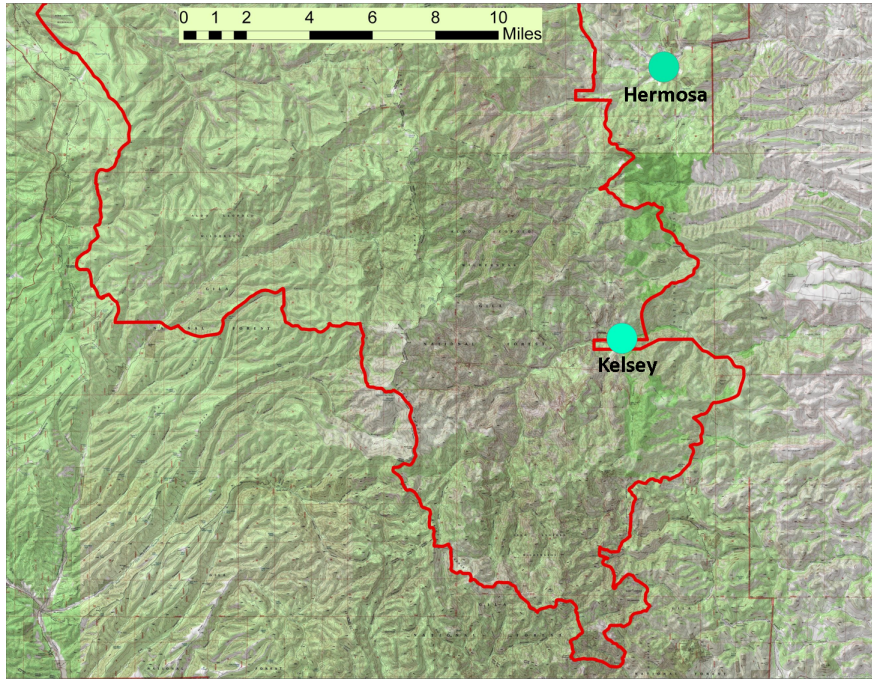


Figure 2: The Hermosa and Kelsey properties on the eastern edge of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness, Gila National Forest.



Figure 3: Elk and mountain lions are among the local residents.

Hermosa The ghost town of Hermosa was established as a mining town in 1881. The original hotel and a few other historical buildings survive. At this time, these historical gems are still fit for renovation. There are additional buildings on the property including a replica mercantile, two houses, and a two story barn (Figures 4). This 60 acre parcel is now surrounded entirely by U.S. Forest Service land. The buildings have been used by Natural Curiosity’s senior leadership to teach the Wild Semester (Figure 5), an immersive, conservation biology program since 2005.

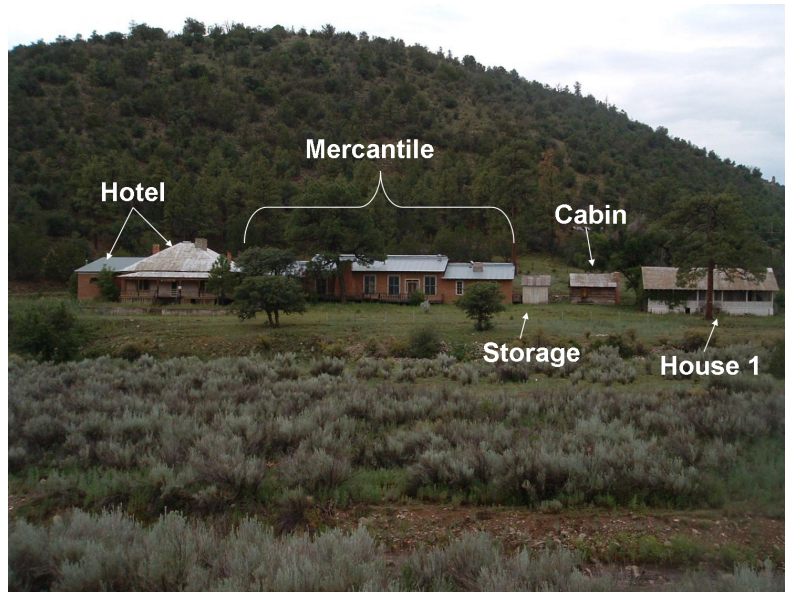


Figure 4: A portion of the Hermosa town site. A second house and the two story barn are not pictured.



Figure 5: Wild Semester students search for elk descending the Black Range in the Aldo Leopold Wilderness, Hermosa’s front yard.

The Kelsey Property The Kelsey property is a 40 acre parcel bordered on three sides by the Aldo Leopold Wilderness and on the fourth side by U.S. Forest Service land (Figure 1). Animas Creek, with a restored population of Rio Grande cutthroat trout, passes through the property. There is a memorial to Navajo scouts, Medal of Honor recipients, and the deceased buffalo soldiers of the U.S. 9th Calvary, that died here in a battle with Victorio, a leader of a group of Warm Springs Apache. Natural Curiosity plans to reach out to the San Carlos Apache to present their history here as well. The Kelsey is a phenomenal property for teaching wilderness skills and conservation (Figures 6 and 7).



Figure 6: Wild Semester students hike through the Kelsey property along Animas Creek.



Figure 7: Wild Semester students learn a little about history at the Massacre Canyon memorial on the Kelsey.

Background to Natural Curiosity

Natural Curiosity's mission is conservation research and education - to create the next generation of conservation leaders. Our senior leadership has conducted field research and educated students through engaged, hands-on learning and wilderness stewardship at the Hermosa and Kelsey properties on the edge of the Aldo Leopold Wilderness in New Mexico since 2005. We know that the future of our planet, the future of our society, depends upon educating and inspiring people today.

We immerse people in nature and give them the knowledge, skills, and confidence to recreate, perform conservation work on the ground, and conduct scientific research in the outdoors. In just one of our projects, we study mountain lions and teach others how to study them with literal hands-on training (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Students, working with Dr. Perry, take measurements, monitor body temperature and assist with collaring a mountain lion south of Hermosa

No other conservation organization trains people with academic knowledge, field research techniques, and back country skills. Our staff has logged over 14,000 student/days teaching and leading field courses, research experiences, and eco-tours. Our alumni include state and federal wildlife professionals, environmental educators, ecologists, and leaders in other conservation organizations.

We have made a difference and we want to, need to, expand that work.

The Envisaged Process

Without Hermosa and Kelsey Natural Curiosity will be offering their own courses, “Boot Camp for Field Biologists”, and “Wilderness”, as well as hosting short one and two day edu-tours initially. We plan to expand our course offerings and training programs over time. Course and training program fees will be paid directly to Natural Curiosity by participants or covered by grants and donations. Our programs can function without the Hermosa facilities, as is reflected in the Financial Summary (Table 1).

With Hermosa and Kelsey With the purchase of the Hermosa and Kelsey Natural Curiosity’s impact on the future of conservation and wilderness stewardship will be multiplied many times over. We will be able to expand our own courses and offerings but our primary revenue will then derive from the rental of these properties, and Hermosa in particular, as a venue for other groups, institutions, and organizations to conduct their own programs such as

- College Courses
 - Ecology
 - Conservation Biology
 - Wildlife Management
 - Mammalogy
 - Herpetology
 - Ornithology
 - Botany
 - Field Techniques
- Scout Troop Trips
- Educational Ecotours
- Wilderness Stewardship Training
- Crosscut Saw Certifications
- Pack Stock Training
- Wildlife Management Workshops
- Fish and Wildlife Youth Practicums
- Wilderness First Aid, First Responder
- Birding Field Trips
- Field Research
- Biological Surveys

The Vision Our mission will now include leveraging these spectacular locations to provide stewardship for the Aldo Leopold Wilderness and providing conservation education, training, and inspiration for thousands over time.

Budget

A generous landowner with a strong conservation ethic has given Natural Curiosity until December 2022 to raise \$1.5 million dollars for the purchase and renovation of the Kelsey and Hermosa properties. We are fervently pursuing grants and donations for this purchase currently. Over time Natural Curiosity will be self-sustaining, generating revenue from our own programs and courses, but primarily through the rental of Hermosa and Kelsey as venues for other conservation and training programs. In tables 2 and 3 that follow, we have presented our projected budget, divided into income and expense tables. Note that the income table includes the successful fundraising of the needed \$1.5 million in 2022 and the expected hold-overs each year for renovation and improvements. These are denoted with '*'s and do not represent new fundraising amounts. Also note that we have been very conservative with projected income from "Full use of property", calculating amounts that are, at present, a near certainty. We expect that revenue in this category in particular will increase over time.

Income

- These amounts are hold-overs from the Fundraising Campaign One time Acquisition planned for 2022, after spending for initial acquisition, renovation, and improvements each year.

Table 2: Projected income through 2025

Budget_Description	2022	2023	2024	2025
Individual Small business contributions	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,100	\$2,205
Corporate Contributions	\$1,000	\$1,050	\$1,103	\$1,158
Training for Field Biologists	\$15,000	\$31,500	\$33,075	\$34,729
Wilderness Course	\$10,000	\$21,000	\$22,050	\$23,153
Edutourism 1 day	\$1,800	\$3,600	\$3,780	\$3,969
Edutourism overnight	\$2,400	\$4,800	\$5,040	\$5,292
Fundraising Campaign One time Acquisition	\$1,500,000	\$650,000*	\$350,000*	\$300,000*
Fundraising Event 1 Gross Revenue	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$2,200
Non Inventory Sales Gross	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,200	\$2,420
Tiered approach to rental		\$4,200	\$8,880	\$19,908
Full use of property		\$32,476	\$1,220	\$54,853
Minimal use of property	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50
Total Income/Revenue	\$1,539,250	\$753,676	\$431,498	\$449,936

Expenses

- This is the amount for the initial purchase of the Hermosa and Kelsey properties.

Table 3: Projected expenses through 2025

Budget_Description	2022	2023	2024	2025
Fundraising Event 2 Other direct fundraiser costs		\$200	\$210	\$221
Rent Mortgage Lease	\$850,000*			
Propane	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,650	\$1,815
Solar	\$250	\$250	\$275	\$303
Water	\$250	\$250	\$275	\$303
Insurance	\$3,600	\$3,700	\$3,800	\$3,900
Building Maintenance		\$2,000		
Improvements		\$300,000	\$50,000	\$25,000
Accounting Fees	\$1,200	\$1,260	\$1,323	\$1,389
Professional Fees Other	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,050	\$1,103
Temporary Help Contract Labor	\$14,000	\$28,000	\$29,400	\$30,870
Supplies	\$200	\$200	\$210	\$221
Telephone Telecommunications	\$960	\$960	\$1,008	\$1,058
Licenses Fees Dues	\$125	\$125	\$500	\$525
Transportation Mileage	\$400	\$800	\$840	\$882
Lodging	\$100	\$600	\$630	\$662
Meals Per diem	\$100	\$400	\$420	\$441
Insurance non employee or property related	\$1,600	\$1,760	\$1,936	\$2,130
Staff Development Continuing Education	\$1,200	\$1,320	\$1,452	\$1,597
Advertising Promotion	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$735
Information Technology and Website	\$230	\$230	\$242	\$254
Flowers Gifts Volunteer Appreciation	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$200
Training FB Expense consumable	\$3,290	\$6,580	\$6,909	\$7,254
Training FB Expense non consumable	\$2,500	\$500	\$525	\$551
Wilderness Course Expense consumable	\$1,880	\$3,760	\$3,948	\$4,145
Wilderness Course Expense non consumable	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,050	\$1,103
Edutourism One Day Expense consumable		\$350	\$368	\$386
Edutourism One Day Expense non consumable	\$200	\$400	\$460	\$529
Edutourism Overnight Expense consumable	\$200	\$400	\$420	\$441
Edutourism Overnight Expense non consumable	\$200	\$400	\$420	\$441
Non Inventory Sales Cost of goods sold	\$500	\$500	\$550	\$605
Total Expenses	\$886,885	\$359,455	\$110,991	\$89,293

APPENDIX 1

Board of Directors

Travis Perry, Ph.D, President Travis has had the privilege of leading field courses since 1997. A certified Wilderness First Responder, C class crosscut sawyer, and wildlife capture team leader, he thrives on engaged teaching, giving students first-hand experience in the subject matter in the wild. He believes that these are the academic and life experiences, more than any others, that change lives, that turn self-doubt into self confidence and turn a fear of the wild into a love of the wild. He has introduced students to the wilderness of New Mexico, the South African bush, the tropical forests of Costa Rica, and the wildlands of the Southeast.



Figure 9: Travis with a lunker in Wyoming.

Megan Pitman Perry, M.S., CEO Megan has developed her lifelong love of wild things and places into a career as a wildlife biologist and educator. She has been the co-director for the Wild Semester Study Away Program since 2011. She received her B.S. in Biology from Furman University where she was a student on the first Wild Semester program. She received her M.S. in Wildlife Biology from Clemson University studying mountain lion populations in southern New Mexico. Since then she has worked as a contract wildlife biologist and continues to volunteer for the Furman Cougar Project managing data and supervising undergraduate students in the field.



Figure 10: Megan riding her favorite opinionated mule

Leslie Clark, B.S., PMP, Treasurer Leslie has experience in all stages of technology enablement. Her strong suit is business process design/improvement. In addition, she has experience with government contracting and compliance. Leslie also has experience with small technology companies and is currently on an engagement with Field and Marketing group working on global strategic projects.



Figure 11: Leslie smiling as she calculates every penny.

Jesse WoodSmith, M.S., Secretary Jesse is a wildlife biologist who most enjoys working with conservation non-profit organizations to protect and improve special landscapes. In her 5 years working with land trusts, she has helped conserve more than 12,000 acres of valuable habitat and steward tens of thousands more. Through AmeriCorps and the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, she worked to educate the public, improve trails and waterways, and enforce private land conservation easements. Jesse looks for ways to connect research to practitioners and build more effective conservation partnerships between public and private entities. She has analyzed USFS data for SC Audubon, informed landowners on avian-friendly forest management practices using USDA-NRCS funds, and written on conservation in the age of anthromes. She currently serves as the Director of Conservation & Stewardship at the Southern Conservation Trust, a land trust dedicated to connecting people to nature and providing environmental education. She is a Wild Semester Alumna. Jesse lives in Georgia with her husband and Carolina dingo.



Figure 12: Jesse smiling about her phenomenal powers of organization.

Keenan Adams, Ph.D, Board Member Keenan was a military brat, however South Carolina is considered home. Adams attended Furman University where he took a Research & Analysis course with Dr. Travis Perry, which inspired him to switch his major from Pre-Med to a Natural Resource focused B.S. in Biology. After Furman, he attended Clemson University and was awarded his M.S. degree in Forest Resources (avian and disturbance ecology) and PhD in Wildlife Biology with a concentration in human dimensions. He has spent the last 15 years working as a land manager and scientist for several agencies in many parts of the country. Now he is working in Puerto Rico at the intersection of sustainable eco-tourism, community well-being and land management. He is serving on the board in his personal capacity and not a representative of the government. .



Figure 13: Keenan flexing his work/life balance.

Tricia Rossettie, M.S., Board Member An avid hiker and naturalist, Tricia Rossettie received her Bachelor's in Biology and Health & Exercise Sciences at Furman University ('12) and is an alumna of Furman's 2011 Wild Semester class. She dabbled in Wildlife Research, Environmental Education, and trail building/Conservation Corps life before returning to academia for her Master's degree in Wildlife Science from New Mexico State University ('19). While at NMSU, she helped to establish their Girls on Adventures for Leadership and Science Program and served in the University's Outdoor Leadership Program, often teaching Wilderness First Aid courses. Experiential and immersive education remain among her greatest passions and she has assisted with all Furman University programming in New Mexico since 2015. She now works as the Lead Wildlife and Conservation Guide at Vermejo, a Ted Turner Reserve.



Figure 14: Tricia connecting a solar battery charger for a remote field camera.

Jenn Summers, Ph.D, Board Member Jennifer (Jenn) Summers is a Program Officer at the National Academy of Sciences Gulf Research Program. Before joining the GRP, Summers was an NAS Science Policy Fellow with the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restore Council (RESTORE) where she worked on grant management for restoration projects focused on Gulf coast restoration after the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Prior to that she earned her PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Tennessee Knoxville. Her dissertation work examined the impacts of sea level rise on rapid evolution in a foundational coastal marsh plant. This research involved collaboration with and training from the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, Oak Ridge National Lab, and the Southeast Climate Adaptation Science Center along with driven and talented students and researchers at both UTK and Tulane University, where she started her degree. Summers earned her Bachelor's in Biology and French from Furman University in South Carolina.



Figure 15: Jenn enjoying a hike like we all wish we were.